

RITUALISM IN TORONTO.



TO THE EDITOR OF THE LEADER.

SIR,—A short time since you published in your paper a sermon preached by the Rev. W. S. Darling, in the church of the Holy Trinity, in defence of certain innovations he had introduced into that church. As I considered the points he advanced untenable and calculated to do much mischief, I fully expected to see a refutation of them; but having been disappointed, I venture to beg you will grant me the privilege of noticing some of them, with a view of guarding our members against the fallacies I conceive they contain.

The first point that I shall notice is his defence of *processional singing, when entering the church at the commencement of Divine service*. His argument taken from "the joyful occasion of marriage service" is, to say the least, far fetched. "That is, (as he says) "a joyful occasion;" but the principle, on which our prayer book is constructed is, that we are deemed of unclean lips until we have made our acknowledgement of guilt, implored God's pardon for it, and received the authoritative assurance, that he is willing to forgive the truly penitent believer. Then, not till then, should we enter upon the angelic work of praising Him in sacred song. The rubric of our Prayer Book directs us to begin morning or evening prayer thus:—At the beginning of morning prayer, the minister shall read with a loud voice one or more of these sentences of the scriptures that follow. I contend, therefore, that Mr. Darling's practice is contrary to the spirit of the Prayer Book; for he sings praises to God before he humbles himself before him in prayer; and is also contrary to the rubric of the Prayer Book, which directs that morning and evening prayer should commence with portions of scripture, read with a loud voice by the minister. It was not fair in Mr. Darling to quote the procession in the marriage service in the defence of his practice; for that procession is prescribed by the rubric, contravenes no principle of the Prayer Book; but is reasonable and right in itself. The rubric directs that the espousals should take place in "the body of the church," so that the whole congregation may be witnesses of them. But the espousals being completed—the contracts between the parties being made, the rubric directs that they should go to the Lord's table, where supplication and prayers

are to be offered up for the newly-married pair, and where the rubric declares that it is desirable that they should receive the holy communion Mr. Darling also cites, for his justification, the procession of the priests and clerks before the corpse, either into the church or towards the grave. There is nothing incongruous—nothing contrary to the spirit of our prayer-book, in this ; but a manifest propriety in the minister and clerks meeting at the entrance of the church yard the corpse of a departed brother and preceding it into the church or to the grave. Besides, it is *ordered* by the Church. And Mr. Darling will find it difficult to justify his practice in the eyes of all thoughtful persons, unless he can show that it is in accordance with the directions of the Prayer book, and is not in contravention of the rubric for “the order of morning and evening prayer.” It won’t do to say (as Mr. Darling does), that “its innate propriety should commend it to our adoption.” The Church to which he belongs is a Church of order, and the rubrics of the Prayer-book, and not the minister’s ideas of what is right and proper, much less what the poet tells us, of “the saints singing in heaven,” must be the rule for all who serve in her tabernacles. I would take the liberty of reminding Mr. Darling that his present practice is very contrary to what he and his friends taught years ago, when they condemned, in unmeasured terms, the erroneous practice that then prevailed in some churches, of beginning Divine service with the “morning” or other hymn. Against this they declaimed most vehemently, as contrary to the spirit of the Prayer Book and in direct contravention of the letter of the rubric. This erroneous practice has been happily abandoned in those churches, where it then prevailed ; but we find Mr. Darling introducing it in a far more objectionable form, and coming out with a very plausible defence of it, before his congregation, and spreading that defence before the world in your columns. (2.) I question Mr. Darling’s right to interpret the term “clerks” in the Prayer Book by his favorite term “choir.” Of “clerks” Wheatly (who was a very high churchman, though of the old school), says : “By ‘clerks’ mentioned in the rubric (which was first inserted in the second book of king Edward), I suppose were meant such persons as were appointed, at the beginning of the Reformation to attend the incumbent in the performance of the offices ; and such as are still in some cathedral churches appointed to look out the lessons, name the anthem, set the psalm, and the like, of which sort I take our parish clerk to be, though we have now seldom more than one to a church.” It is possible that “the Directorium Anglicanum,” which has many queer things in it, may be Mr. Darling’s authority.

II. Mr. Darling is somewhat of a poet, and I suppose, entitled to claim "a poet's license"; or surely he would never have ventured upon giving these reasons for bowing at "the Gloria patri," whenever it occurs in the service. "We are to worship in spirit and in truth; we pray that God's will may be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Now, the angels, who are spirits, and therefore must worship spiritually, filled with reverential awe, cover their faces with their wings, when they cry one to another, Holy, Holy, Holy, and the four and twenty elders, who, in heaven shall stand before the throne fall down upon their faces, when they cry Holy Father, Holy Son, and Holy Ghost, one Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Surely, we are not worshipping as the spirits worship, nor are we doing God's will on earth, as it is done in heaven, if we withhold from him the homage of the bended head, which they do reverently present." Had the church, which is very full in her directions, thought as Mr. Darling does, we should have had in her rubrics, or at least in her canons, directions to do so; but we look in vain for them, and we are reduced to fanciful arguments for our authority for doing as he does. His second reason is still richer. "We do so, because, in the second commandment we are expressly forbidden to bow down to a false God, which command, by direct implication, requires us to bow down to the true God. Now to bow down is an act of bodily worship, and no more fitting occasion can be desired for this act of outward adoration, than when the whole congregation unite with one voice in ascribing glory to the triune Jehovah, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Because we are expressly *forbidden* to bow down before a *false God*, we are therefore *commanded* (according to Mr. Darling) to bow down before the true God, whenever his august name is mentioned during divine service. Surely this is a new style of logic! His third reason is the only one that has any argument in it. The 18th canon directs that "when, in the time of Divine service, the Lord Jesus shall be mentioned due and lowly reverence shall be done by all persons present." But I would remind Mr. Darling that the introduction of a series of canons into the Provincial Synod, by the committee on canons, with the full consent of all the members thereof, shows clearly that the canons of the Church of England (except the 36th, to which all clergy have subscribed) are not considered as binding on the clergy, much less upon the laity of this country. But even granting that the 18th canon is binding upon Mr. Darling, does that require or direct people to turn to the east or to "the altar," as Mr. Darling is pleased to call the Lord table, (though the word in that sense is not to be found in the Prayer Book,) and make lowly reverence

according to the present practice of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto? Mr. Darling's reason, "because in these evil days men are becoming intolerant of mystery," leads me to ask, if two wrongs make a right? and whether, because the deposed Colenso went wrong in one direction, we should go wrong in another?

III. Mr. Darling's reasons for his litany desk are novel to me: "The rubric before the 51st Psalm in the communion office suggests a special place for the saying of the litany, and in certain Royal injunctions of King Edward the VI. and Queen Elizabeth—which the church has accepted and acted upon from that day till the present, and which are binding upon us at this hour—the litany is required to be said at a low desk, to be placed opposite the gates." Now the rubric referred to by Mr. Darling is this: "They shall kneel upon their knees, and the priests and the clerks kneeling in the place, where they are accustomed to say the litany) shall say this Psalm." I cannot see how this rubric designates in the least the place where the litany is to be said (as Mr. Darling alleges); but merely, that this 51st Psalm is to be said in the *same place* as that, in which the litany is said. To help him fix the place Mr. Darling refers to certain injunctions of King Edward the 6th and of Queen Elizabeth and which, he says, are binding upon us at the present day. This certainly is news to me, and to most of my brethren in the church. But Wheatly throws a different light upon these injunctions from that thrown upon them by Mr. Darling. He says that "these injunctions referred to the litany," *when it was a distinct service*, for, says he "it was ordered by them, that, immediately before High Mass, or the time of the Communion of the Sacrament, the priest, with others of the choir, should kneel in the middle of the church." Again he says:—"Indeed until the last review, in 1661, the litany was designed to be a distinct service by itself, to be used some time after the morning prayer was over." But now, (mark his words: for they refer to our service as it is, and not to what it was before 1661) "that the morning prayer and litany are used at one time and the same service, there is evidently no provision made for changing the place, where they should be said, as was the case before the last revision of the Prayer Book in 1661." We thus see the leaning of the school, to which Mr. Darling has attached himself, and which prefers the Prayer Book, as it was before the final version of it, to what it now is; for I think that he will find it impossible to adduce anything from the rubrics, *as they are*, to authorize the revival amongst us of an old practice, laid aside by competent authorities in 1661.

There are many strange things in those injunctions, things utterly unsuitable for our church in this day and in this country; and if they are to be taken as of authority at all, they must be taken as a whole; which even Mr. Darling would not be prepared for. But as Mr. Darling has promised conformity to the Prayer Book, and not to those injunctions, he has no right to make those changes on their authority. He says, that "the law of the Church of England is clear on this point." This I strongly doubt; as the Prayer Book gives no such intimation; but, since the year 1661, has been clearly against any such practice. Mr. Darling's second reason for his change in this particular is equally unconvincing and very fanciful. "This is the law and it is founded upon the text of Holy Scripture which says, 'let the priests, the ministers of the Lord wait between the porch and the altar;' in this position they were to say that litany of Divine prescription—'Spare thy people, O Lord, spare them and let not Thine heritage be brought to confusion.'" I deny that it is the law, and I think I have proved the contrary upon the authority of one quite as learned in such matters as the assistant minister of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto. In one part of Mr. Darling's sermon I fully concur, and that is where he says that "it surely is not a matter of great consequence in itself whether the litany be read from a stall or from a desk three feet nearer the congregation;" but I do not concur in thinking that "the church has commanded the litany to be read from a desk in front of the gates," and therefore I think it a pity that he should introduce a practice which is calculated to give offence, and which is not prescribed by the Prayer Book.

IV. Mr. Darling devotes considerable space to a practice which, he acknowledges, "gives great offence to some, viz, that in reading the communion office he so kneels as to face the east, and thereby turns his back upon the congregation;" and he gives for it the following reasons:—1st. Because it is the express law of the Church in this particular (as many of her learned men read it.) 2nd. Because of her general mind as expressed in various places in the Prayer-book and elsewhere. 3rd. Because, when properly understood, it is surely in itself useful to the priest and profitable to the people. I propose, says he, to explain why I think this to be the case, and I ask your kind attention. By turning to the rubric immediately before the communion office you will see that the table at the communion time having a fair linen cloth upon it, and the priest standing at the *north side*, shall say the Lord's Prayer, and the collect following. Now, the question is, What is meant by the *north side*? Many will say (being influenced by the practice to which

they have been accustomed), that the north *side* means the north *end*; but we must not be too hasty in coming to the conclusion. The word "*side*" has not usually the meaning of the word "*end*." One of the most learned writers of the present day on liturgical matters is archdeacon Freeman. His works on the principles of divine service are placed on the list of books which almost all the bishops require to be read by their candidates for holy orders. He is regarded by all as a very high authority. "There is no reasonable doubt whatever," says he, "as to the intention of the English Church about the position of her celebrant in administering the holy communion." In order to make this matter plain, it is to be observed that the slab, or surface of the altar, or holy table, was always conceived of as divided into three portions of about equal size. The centre stone, called "the midst of the altar," was exclusively used for actual celebration. The other portions were called "the left or north side," and "the right or south side,"—the term "*side*" being used with reference to "the middle portion." The most solemn parts of the rite, then were performed "at the middle of the table;" the subordinate parts at the northern portions. In all cases it certainly mean with the face turned eastward.

"The service says, 'the priest standing at the north side of the table shall say the Lord's prayer. Now this could not possibly in those days, when this order was framed, be understood to mean anything else than facing the left or northern portion of the table; because the terms north side, midst of the altar and south side were clearly understood as ritual terms, indicating special well known parts of the table.' Having by me Freeman's work, I was curious enough to enquire on what *authorities* he made these statements, and I found as such; "the Syrian Liturgy of St. James;" "the ancient English communion offices by Maske," (who went over to the Church of Rome many years ago, and the Roman "Ritus Celebrandi Missam." In order to estimate aright the weight of Archdeacon Freeman's authority on this subject it should be known that, though he is described by Mr Darling as a "strong opponent of that much abused body of men—the extreme ritualists," yet he was one of the editors of the second edition of "The Directorium Anglicanum," which has been utterly repudiated by all sound churchmen. I am led to place little reliance upon Archdeacon Freeman's opinion, founded on such very questionable authorities, from the fact, that whilst the first Prayer Book following the Romish practice directed, that the priest "standing before the altar" should say the opening prayers of the communion office, the rubric now directs that they shall be said, "the

priest standing at the north side; for the former rubric, having been perfectly clear and definite, it would not have been necessary to change it in reference to this matter, *unless a change of position was also intended*—a removal of the priest a little to the north of his former position, still facing to the east, could not fairly be inferred from the words “stand at the north side,” as contrasted with standing, afore the midst of the table, Standing at the north side must mean, in this case, standing at the north or right side of the table, so that it will be on the priest’s left hand when facing the people. It will not do to urge, as Mr. Darling does, that in this case the word “end” would have been used; for in the Scotch Prayer Book, in the corresponding rubric, *both words* are used as *synonymous*; “The presbyter standing at the north side or end of the holy table shall say, etc.” In this view of the case I am sustained by authorities of far greater weight than Archdeacon Freeman. Wheatly, in treating of this subject, says:—“Wherever the Lord’s table be placed, the priest is obliged to stand at the north side or end, as the Scotch Prayer Book expresses it; the design being, that the priest may be the better seen and heard, which he cannot be but at the north side or end.” With regard to the rubric, which directs the priest to stand before the Lord’s table, when preparing the elements for consecration, Wheatly says, that, “when the priest says the prayer of consecration he is to stand, so that he may, with the more readiness and decency, break the bread before the people, and take the cup into his hands. As the rubric directs him to do this he must be on the north side, for if he stood before the table, his body would hinder the people from seeing; so that he must stand at the north side, there being no other place mentioned in our rubric for performing any part of this office. In the Roman Catholic Church the priest stands before the altar; as the rubric of 1549, in our first Prayer Book, directed. In the Greek Church, where there is no chancel-door to be closed, when the consecration of the elements takes place, a curtain is let down to put out of sight what is being done by the priest. *The evident intention of our Prayer Book is, that the people should be witnesses of what is being done.*”

Proctor, whose work on the Prayer Book is the one used at Trinity College, in the city of Toronto, says: “The rubric before the prayer of consecration was added in 1661, to provide against inconveniences which had been felt in reaching the elements, when they were placed in the middle of the table, and the table stood north and south. Some divines have sought to remedy this by standing in front of the table, according to the rubric of 1549, aforeside of the table. The priest is now to stand

before the table, to order the bread and wine, placing them so that he may conveniently reach them when he is to "*break the bread before the people.*"

Blunt, whom Mr Darling quotes in another part of his sermon, with great approbation, says, in his Parish Priest: "The priest standing before the table is a very different phrase from standing at 'the north side of the table,' and implies a different thing, viz: that he shall stand in front of the table, with his back to the people till he has ordered the elements and prepared them for the rite, interposing his person between the table and the congregation, till whatever is merely mechanical in the act shall have been completed. This done he turns to the north side, and 'breaks the bread and takes the cup before the people,' *i. e., in their sight*—the Church not wishing to make the manner of consecration, as the Romish church does, a mystery. So that they mistake this rubric altogether, and violate both its letter and its spirit, who consecrate the elements with their backs to the people, after the manner of the church of Rome"

From these extracts it will be seen that those commentators on the Prayer Book, who are considered of the highest authority in the church, condemn practices like those of Mr. Darling, and show that they are contrary to the principles on which the liturgy is founded; but (as Blunt says) are in accordance with the practice of "the Church of Rome." Mr. Darling lays great stress—in support of his practice of offering up the prayers in the communion office with his face towards the east and his back towards the congregation—upon his quotation from Cardwell: "This is no inference (he says) drawn by those, who favor the practice; for this principle was expressly stated as the ground of their action by the revisers of the Prayer Book in A. D. 1661. The Puritans demanded that the ministers should always face the people during prayer. The answer of the bishops to this demand is concluded in the following words which I quote exactly from Cardwell's history of the conference—'the ministers' turning to the people is not the most convenient throughout the whole ministration. When he speaks to them as in lessons, absolution, and benediction, it is convenient that he turn to them. When he speaks for them to God, it is fit that they should all turn another way, as the ancient church ever did.'" Now, what does this amount to? None of the clergy of the church in this country, that I am aware of, advocate the turning of *their faces to the people*; nor did the bishops in the conference, mentioned by Cardwell. The position of the officiating minister at the Lord's table, when offering up the prayers prescribed in the communion office, is always, amongst us, with his face towards the

Lord's table ; and there is nothing in the answer of the bishops to the Puritans, to forbid this being done. In defence of the same practice Mr. Darling further says : " The people should remember that what the celebrant does in every celebration is to imitate, in his humble measure and as Christ ordained, the action of Christ. " In order to this it is important and has ever been the custom of the church," (which Wheatly, Proctor and Blunt positively deny.) " that he should stand at the midst of the holy table, as one leading a commonaction to all, pleading that one only sacrifice with the Saviour continually offered before the Father's throne in Heaven, and which, according to this ordinance we specially commemorate, present and plead in the highest rite of the church." I am quite willing to allow this argument to go for what it is worth, which is very little; and am glad to find, that Mr. Darling indignantly repudiates any idea of "adoration" of the elements. No doubt he is quite sincere in this repudiation; but he will, I trust, excuse me, if I remind him of the caution of St. Paul, " Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"—and of the fact that one great error of those, in whose footsteps he seems to me and to many others, to be treading, is this very one—of the adoration of the elements in the Lord's supper. Archdeacon Freeman, whom Mr. Darling so highly lauds, and who has had the advantage of having been *behind the scenes*, and therefore knows well whereof he speaks, says : " Doctrines have been maintained—and practices founded on them, about which, whatever defence may be set up for them, this much, at least, is certain, and can be proved to a demonstration, that they find no recognition in the ritual of the primitive ages. I speak (says he) more particularly of the tenet, that one purpose and a principal one, (to say the least,) of the Holy Eucharist, is to provide for the church an object of Divine worship actually enshrined in the elements, viz., the Lord Jesus Christ—that the church ought to pay towards that supposed personal presence on the altar and towards the elements containing them that worship, which at other times she directs to Him, as seated on the right hand of God. Such is the position laid down and acted on" (by the extreme ritualists). " The altar we are told, is for the time being the majestic throne of God—the presence (I cite the language of the upholders of this view) is of such a nature as to demand at our hands the same worship as we commonly pay to the Holy Trinity in heaven." In " the Directorium Anglicanum" the consecrated wine is styled "*the blood*"—and the unlucky priest, who, through any inadvertence, drops any of it, is required to kneel down and lick it up with his tongue ; and, if he cannot by that process entirely eradicate it, he is to scrape it out with his knife, and having burnt the shavings, he is to put the ashes thereof on the altar."

and do penance for forty days. The fair linen cloth, on which the consecrated elements have been placed, is called "the corporal, or that on which has lain the Lord's body;" and laics are forbidden to wash it, that operation being confined to the priests. This is the doctrine legitimately taught by that peculiar reverence, which has been, of late years in this country shown to the Lord's table; and unless those who pay that peculiar reverence to it are not very much on their guard, they run very great risk of being led gradually, and probably imperceptibly, (as hundreds of clergymen in England have been led) to embrace this most dangerous doctrine.

V. With regard to the recommendation of Mr. Darling to his people, that they should all "rise when the offertory is presented," it is unnecessary to say very much. It may seem a very good and proper custom; but I would simply ask, *whether it is directed by our Prayer Book or not?* and further, whether it would not be much better for our clergy to follow its directions, than what may seem proper and desirable to each individual? No doubt many of the innovations introduced from time to time into the Romish church by well-meaning persons, appeared excellent to them and others, at the time of their introduction; but we know to what they led. And so many of the practices lately introduced by Mr. Darling, at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto, may seem, and, I doubt not, do seem to him proper and desirable,—but is that a sufficient reason for their introduction by him, *when he has solemnly promised compliance with the rules and regulations of the Prayer Book, and which these practices contravene?* I think not. We have a Prayer Book on which, I think, none of us can improve; and I feel that it is highly desirable that all should conform to it, and carry out its true principles—neither omitting anything required by its rubrics, nor adding anything to it of our own whim or fancy.

I would ask a candid examination of the above review of Mr. Darling; arguments both by himself and congregation, on the one hand; and, on the other hand, by those who may be tempted by the lengths to which he has gone, to desert the church of their forefathers "the great bulwark of the Reformation," in order that they may one and all see, that, however his recently adopted practices may correspond with those of the early reformation days in England, they do not correspond with the practice, principles, and directions of the Prayer Book, and which are the only ones we are called upon to recognize in our day.

A PRAYER BOOK CHURCHMAN.

Diocese of Toronto, Oct, 1861.

